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NINTH PLENUM SPEECH OF STANISLAW BRODZINSKI
ON DEVELOPING AGRICULTURE AND SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRY
IN BIALYSTOK WOJEWODZTWO, POLAND

Nowe Drogi
 Warsaw, Oct 1953

[The following report of Stanislaw Brodzinski, First Secretary of the Bialystok Wojewodztwo Committee of the PZPR, was given at the Ninth Plenum of the KC PZPR (Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party), held in Warsaw on 20-30 October 1953.

The report was given at the plenum as an amplification of the featured report of Premier Boleslaw Bierut, "Task of Party in Struggle to Raise Standard of Living of Workers in Current Phase of Building Socialism." An English-language translation of Bierut's report is available in the PAP (Polish Press Agency) release of 6 November 1953, pages 1-44.]

The theses of the Central Committee and Bierut's report have set a very special task before Bialystok Wojewodztwo because of its agricultural character and its great lag behind the other wojewodztwos.

The many political and economic campaigns and the current purchasing drive have been an expression of the positive attitude of the peasant masses. Where we have been able to reach the individual villages, mobilize the peasants, and convince the small and medium peasants, we have found help in combating kulak resistance.

Having gained the assistance of the small and medium peasant we are carrying on soil-conservation work to improve the condition of the meadows. Much of the land and road improvement work comes under community projects. The peasants' contribution has been remarkable.

The work of our party organization is no doubt responsible for the great increase in agricultural production achieved by the Bialystok peasants after the liberation. The difficulty is that our daily political work and the work of mobilization is still not adequate; it is not geared to the fulfillment of the current tasks.

The Bialystok peasant is still being exploited and oppressed by the kulak. Of about 100,000 small and medium peasants with holdings from 1-5 hectares, 20,000 do not have a horse. We have not provided these peasants with adequate aid through the MTS or given them neighborly assistance through the gmina people's councils. Many of these peasants are still economically dependent on the kulak.

Besides the peasants' economic dependence on the kulak, there is also the kulak's political influence to be considered. In many instances when the small peasant tried to withdraw from the kulak's influence the kulak resorted to terror, and our aid to the peasant was not always adequate.

We have not always handled kulak activities properly because our party organization was weak and without influence. Many villages do not have a party organization, which means that their political and economic life is being shaped without proper guidance. The gmina and powiat activists visit these villages only sporadically, leaving the kulak free to use his political influence over the masses. In spite of this state of affairs, however, the peasant masses understand and support the policy of the party and the government.

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To fulfill the tasks set forth in Bierut's report, and to assure an increase in agricultural production and a systematic rise in the standard of living, Bialystok Wojewodztwo must first of all strengthen and expand the party organization. This task can be achieved only through an increased effort on the part of our activists, through a broad and more systematic development of our political work, and through the work of gmina, powiat, and village activists where a primary party organization already exists.

Although we have been trying for several months to expand our work among the poor peasantry through the National Front committees in the gmina people's councils, we have not yet worked out any effective forms of activity. We have not been able to break down the resistance of the cliques and opportunists among the activists in the primary organizations, who brand entire villages as hostile to the government without making any distinction between the poor peasantry, the medium peasant, and the kulak. This improper attitude hampers our approach to the peasant masses in Bialystok. We must correct this attitude of the activists and we must teach all our party members the proper approach to the peasant masses.

We must also recognize the growing needs of our peasants. Under the pre-war government the villages in Bialystok were more backward and not as rich as villages in other wojewodztwos. At the moment the peasant in Bialystok has reached a higher level economically and has improved his living conditions. He wants a different life, a new life, and a more comfortable life. He is willing to accept fertilizer, selected grain, and government aid in developing his farm. However, to date we have been unable to satisfy the peasant demand for building materials for farm buildings and houses. The peasant feels the need of these things; he wants to change and transform the village.

A more efficient distribution of these materials would greatly improve conditions but the distribution has been most inadequate for the growing needs of Bialystok. Increased deliveries of materials as provided in the theses and an increased effort to allocate these materials for the village will be an economic incentive and will increase the peasant's interest in raising agricultural production, since it is in his own interest also.

We must expand the brickyards of the wojewodztwo for the needs of the region, using local raw materials. Up to now, the brickyards have been producing for key industries and key investment projects. We must increase their production, especially the production of the smaller brickyards which serve the local industry. We must also obtain larger allocations of lumber.

The activation of the poor peasantry is a real problem in our wojewodztwo. The poor and the medium peasant must join in discussing the political and economic development, and make suggestions for its progress. It is my opinion that besides using National Front committees, we should choose the best small and medium peasants to form the bailiff's auxiliary council. The bailiff has a difficult job in the purchasing drive if he does not have the support of the village activists. It is especially difficult when the village has no primary political organization and the working peasant, especially the small peasant, feels no obligation to assist. If we use cooperation with the bailiff as one method of systematic work with the poor peasantry, we can reach the masses more easily.

The wojewodztwo has great resources for the development of livestock production. Meadows and pastures constitute one third of the land area. Because meadows have not been properly exploited, the development of livestock production has been negligible in comparison to its possibilities. For instance, land-improvement projects in which the peasants participate have been few.

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With proper management, the lands could form a fodder base for thousands of cattle and sheep. In my opinion there is a great need for guidance and aid from the central authorities. Allocations for the improvement of land must be greatly increased every year. We ought to have an institute to handle meadow management and we ought to organize production of equipment especially designed for the improvement and maintenance of meadows.

We are in a much better position than formerly to mobilize the peasant masses for the work, since they have already been convinced that it is to their personal advantage. Current improvements have given concrete results: the hay crop on improved lands has risen from 18 quintals to 70-80 quintals per hectare. Land improvement will permit a more rapid development of cattle and sheep production.

Our wojewodztwo should also expand the cultivation of certain industrial crops, especially sugar beets, potatoes, and flax. To expand the production of these crops we also need local industries to process them. It would be appropriate to build a sugar-refining plant for processing sugar beets, which would also help in the development of livestock in the wojewodztwo. We must speed up the construction of a starch plant. This will also aid in the development of livestock production. We already have more than 300,000 sheep, but the skins and milk are not being properly utilized.

The peasants slaughter about 100,000 sheep a year for their own needs. The skins are dressed and tanned in a very primitive fashion. We could develop a fur enterprise to utilize these skins and use the milk in the manufacture of cheese.

The expansion of the dairy industry should go hand in hand with the development of livestock. The number of dairies and cheese-processing plants is inadequate but no one seems to be interested. The main fault lies in the lack of initiative on our part. However, we beg the central authorities to recognize our untapped resources and to help us obtain larger allocations for a more rapid development and increase in consumer goods.

Speeding up electrification by building small power plants in connection with river regulation in land-reclamation projects will also speed up the development of the wojewodztwo. Small power plants can be built on many of our rivers. There are three or four points at which construction could be started in 1954 with the aid of the state and with a large contribution from the peasants.

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